

**Land Board Agenda Item**  
**August 21, 2006**

**PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF LAND BANKING PARCEL SALE #374  
and #375**

**Background:**

The department brings to the board two isolated, highly valued Land Banking parcels totaling 1270 acres near Livingston in Park County for preliminary approval to continue through the Land Banking process.

The inclusion of high value parcels in the mix of state tracts sold will allow us to purchase all of the properties nominated. To date approximately 96% of the acres of state land considered for sale under land banking are low value grazing lands with appraised values less than \$200 per acre. The Department is attempting to purchase replacement properties that are consolidated, have an agricultural component and recreational amenities. The value of property the Department is currently evaluating for acquisition is \$300-\$13,750 per acre. Therefore inclusion of high value tracts in the acreage sold allows the department to purchase properties that have been nominated and continue to add potential acquisition parcels for consideration.

**Public Process:**

A letter soliciting comments and generally explaining the land banking sale process was sent April 10, 2006 to interested parties, included the following: surrounding landowners, members of the Land Banking Negotiated Rulemaking Committee; Park County Board of County Commissioners; Livingston Rod & Gun Club and the MT Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

A legal notice was published in the Livingston Enterprise March 24, 2006 requesting that comments be submitted on the proposal by April 10, 2006. Craig Campbell discussed the proposed land sale with the Park County Planning staff.

Public comment was primarily related to the future use of the parcels, the potential for development on adjacent private lands and its value for wildlife habitat. The Department received a written statement from the lessee detailing the future use of the state lands. The intentions are to develop a road and observatory to serve development on adjacent private lands and place a conservation easement on 1,000 +/- acres. Any future development will be regulated by applicable local, state, or federal regulations.

**Agency Recommendation:**

The Director recommends the Board of Land Commissioners approve the further evaluation of Sale #374 and 375 via the Land Banking program.